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HORSE HARNESS DECORATIONS FROM BOHEMIA AND TRACES OF ITS PRODUCTION IN THE 8TH CENTURY

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The horse harness decorations in the 8th-9th century in Bohemia are mostly connected with the Carpathian Basin. These decorations are often gilded or silvered and represent prestige subjects/goods probably status symbols together with local spurs with hooks. It is important because there are no horseman's burials (with 3 unrevised exceptions) and also inhumation graves are known from the half of the 9th century. In this time, Carolingian status symbols (e.g. spurs and swords) predominated in male's graves. New prospections with metal detectors as well as archaeological excavation bring evidence about local production (press-model, unfinished phalerae, ingots) and local innovation of some types of it (pieces without exact analogies). Some luxurious pieces are very rare in Middle Europe, they have parallels only in west Slovakia and Balaton region in Hungary, some of them belong to the so-called italo-byzantine group. Others are distributed also in southern regions of the Carpathian Basin in Croatia. The finds of harness decoration are concentrated on some hillforts and hilltop sites in Bohemia, the most important are Tismice and Hostim in the Middle Bohemia, both with the area more than 15 ha.

Keywords

horse harness, Bohemia, Early Middle Ages, local production of decorations, long-distance connection

Note/comment